

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 7-12 are added.

In the office action, claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 3,882,776 to Clemens. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 includes the feature of a plurality of plates mounted on a shaft. In contrast, Clemens does not disclose a shaft. Further, Clemens does not disclose a plurality of plates mounted on a shaft. It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action defined shafts of Clemens (raised centerpoints 23, 26) are not shafts, but are simply raised centerpoints to keep springs 21 and 27 in position. In addition, even if centerpoints 23, 26 could be considered shafts (which Applicants submit they cannot), there can only be one spring (21 OR 27) "mounted" on each centerpoint. As such, Clemens does not disclosed the claimed "plurality of plates" mounted on "a shaft". The same argument applies to claim 6.

Claim 1 includes the feature of a base attached to a second plate for receiving a portion of a force transmitted to a first plate by a panel. In contrast, the rigidly-fixed center plate 22 of Clemens prevents any of the force transmitted to spring 21 by active weight member 20 from being received by preventive pressure member 25 through spring 27. This is evident from Fig. 2 of Clemens where spring 21 is shown in a compressed state and spring 27 in shown in the same state as in Fig. 1. The same argument applies to claim 6.

In light of the above, it is respectfully submitted that Clemens does not disclose each and every feature of claims 1-6 and, therefore, rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is inappropriate. As a result, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned.

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Respectfully submitted,

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